

BLESS THIS MESS

Original Pilot 1:
A Tired but Hopeful Clergy

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In this episode of Bless This Mess, Ben and Bekah answer a question from a clergy member who is finding it difficult to bring change to a church where old ways are deeply rooted. They dive into the challenges of leading transformation, exploring how much of ourselves we can reveal while in leadership and the importance of “love your neighbour as yourself” looking after our own needs while caring for others.

They discuss the psychology of change, including the fears it brings, how to honour the past without being trapped by it, and practical approaches to navigating resistance in a congregation. Using Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, they unpack why church growth can put immense pressure on leaders and communities alike, and offer insight into balancing self-care with the call to lead. Whether you’re facing change in your church, workplace, or personal life, Ben and Bekah provide honest, thoughtful guidance on moving forward while staying grounded.

In this episode:

- **Ben took time off and the world still survived! Feel free to write to Ben to find out his terrible film suggestions.**
- **Egg Timers- Can you boil an egg for 20 minutes? Time keeping in therapy.**
- **We read the question from a 'tired but hopeful Clergy'**
- **Acknowledge what a brave and vulnerable letter it is and how the clergy can self reflect.**
- **How vulnerable should a community leader be? How much of yourself should you show?**
- **Change Resistance and control. How we stay safe by controlling things around us.**
- **What does good care of Clergy look like?**
- **Recent church statistics proves Clergy burnout prevalent https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2025/5-december/news/uk/clergy-feel-isolated-and-lonely-latest-living-ministry-study-concludes**
- **Put on your own oxygen mask first**
- **'Love your neighbour as yourself' Matthew 22 vs 39**
- **Are we loving ourselves in order to love others?**
- **Maslow Hierarchy Of Needs https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html**
- **Idea of Rest - in a world that encourages the opposite**
- **How do we 'model' our own behaviour?**
- **Church growth and the pressure the institute puts on clergy.**
- **Can we think about growth in a different way? Can we begin with what we around have.**
- **Boundaries; responsible for congregation not the congregational comfort**
- **Edward Freidman: Failure of Nerve https://www.amazon.com/Failure-Nerve-Leadership-Age-Quick/dp/159627042X**
- **What is emphatic leadership?**
- **How do we come into situations?**
- **Sankofa- going back to fetch something, especially when you’ve left it behind https://www.stockton.edu/sankofa/about.html#:~:text=Sankofa**
- **Fall and Redemption, how to reach back to the past.**
- **Ben reflects on what he felt about his response.**

We want to hear from you, especially our vicars!

Bless this Mess cannot exist in isolation. If you have a question for our podcast please click this confidential link

If you'd like to comment on the podcast you can do so via our email address:

podcast@clergysupport.org.uk

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Bless This Mess is a podcast from Clergy Support Trust, produced by Meraki Creative Therapies. It was recorded and mixed by La Barca Sound, with engineering by Nick Sowden and sound design by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden. The podcast is produced by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden, with content developed by Meraki Creative Therapies in collaboration with Catherine Good. It is hosted by Bekah Nelson and Ben Cahill-Nicholls, with intro and section scripts written by Louise Stanley, and was recorded on location at All Saints Church, Tilford.

Warning: *This episode contains themes around mental health. If you find any of the content difficult or triggering, please consider reaching out for support. You can contact Samaritans on 116 123 (free, 24/7), call NHS 111 and press 2 for the urgent mental health helpline in England, or in an emergency call 999. Clergy may also wish to contact Clergy Support Trust or their diocesan wellbeing team https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/*